

CIACO NID 81 [REDACTED]

April 17, 1981

POLAND: Liberalization of Party Statutes

A commission under the direction of party leader Kania yesterday approved changes that will liberalize some party procedures but not enough to satisfy staunch reformists. [REDACTED]

The changes are to be made in the party statutes and ratified at the party congress in July. They allow for the secret election of officials at all levels, the nomination of multiple candidates, and the limitation of party secretaries, above the lowest level, to two terms in office. The latter provision presumably would also apply to Kania. [REDACTED]

Liberalization of the election rules will make it more difficult for the central apparatus to control the selection of lower ranking officials. The Central Committee allowed party organizations to experiment with liberalized rules last December, and there has been significant turnover at the basic party level. [REDACTED]

By proposing the changes, the central leadership hopes to demonstrate its commitment to reform in general and blunt pressures from lower levels. Party leaders also may believe that, above the basic party level, they can manipulate the elections because few will know the candidates for office. Rank-and-file reformers, on the other hand, believe they can use the rules to oust conservatives at all levels of the party. [REDACTED]

Other changes in the party statutes appear more traditional. While allowing a party member greater opportunity to criticize the majority viewpoint, the statutes prohibit "the use of democracy for work of a factional nature." They also reaffirm the party's commitment to democratic centralism, something that staunch reformers consider the root of the party's problems. [REDACTED]

Dissatisfied with only half measures, rank-and-file reformers will press for more changes and for greater influence at the party congress. Those who organized the meeting in Torun on Wednesday already plan to hold several more sessions in the coming months, including one in Gdansk. [REDACTED]

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Military Situation

We have observed little change in military activity
in and around Poland [REDACTED]

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